



CLEAN VERSION OF AMENDED CLAIMS

C1 23. A method for the transmission of data in a synchronous digital hierarchy (SDH) network, comprising the steps of: transmitting to a node of the network a form of data signal from outside the network, converting the signal into a virtually concatenated information structure, and transporting the signal through the network in the virtually concatenated information structure, the converting step including the step of processing a path overhead of the signal, whereby path overhead information is maintained.

24. The method of claim 23, comprising the step of converting the signal so transported into a signal of the form of the data signal transmitted to the node of the network, the converting step including the step of processing a path overhead of the signal so transported, whereby path overhead information is maintained.

C2 45. A method for the transmission of data in a synchronous digital hierarchy (SDH) network, comprising the steps of: transmitting to a node of the network a contiguously concatenated data signal from outside the network, converting the signal into a virtually concatenated information structure, and transporting the signal through the network in the virtually concatenated information structure, the converting step comprising the step of processing a path overhead of the signal including the step of using a part of the path overhead to indicate a sequence of frames in the virtually concatenated information structure, whereby path overhead information is maintained.

C2  
46. The method of claim 45, comprising the step of converting the signal so transported into a signal of the form of the data signal transmitted to the node of the network, the converting step comprises the step of processing the path overhead of the signal so transported, and restoring the part of the path overhead used to indicate the sequence of frames in the virtually concatenated information structure, whereby path overhead information is maintained.

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C3  
62. A synchronous digital hierarchy (SDH) network in which data is carried in a virtually concatenated information structure, the network comprising: tributary interfaces arranged and configured to process signals received in a contiguously concatenated form to convert them into a virtually concatenated form for transfer across the network, the tributary interfaces comprising means for processing path overheads of the signals including means for using a part of the path overhead to indicate a sequence of frames in the virtually concatenated information structure, whereby path overhead information is maintained.

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